SELF-EMPLOYED SECTOR

their
CONSTRUCTIVE
role
in
planned
economy

PROF. N. G. RANGA

PUBLISHED BY
INDIAN PEASANT INSTITUTE

NIDUBROLU P. O.
Guntur Dist. (A.P.)

96, North Avenue,
NEW DELHI.

SELF-EMPLOYED SECTOR

*

(their constructive role in planned economy)

BY

Prof. N. G. RANGA

PUBLISHED BY

THE INDIAN PEASANT INSTITUTE,

NIDUBROLU.

ary, 1959. PRICE : 0-50 nP.

For copies write to :

THE INDIAN PEASANT INSTITUTE,
NIDUBROLU P.O., ANDHRA PRADESH.
OR
96, NORTH AVENUE,
NEW DELHI.

PRINTED AT SREE RAMAKRISHNA PRINTING WORKS, VIJAYAWADA.

Dedicated

to

SRI N. GURULINGACHARI

An artisan and a creative sculptur and artist, who strives in the traditional and time honoured self-employment enjoying freedom of profession, self-reliance and self-respect, as a socio - economic unit.

CONTENTS

*

CHAPTER I

The Self-employed Peoples' Sector

So far the Planning Commission has been examining and classifying our indigenous socio-economic organisation from the point of view of the principles and tenets of Economic and Socio-economic planning evolved on the basis of the experience and exigencies of Western and Russian Societies. So they have wrongly viewed and assessed the social life and significance of the vast masses of Self-employed peasants and artisans of our country and classified them as a part of the Private Sector.

The Planning Commission has taken for granted that not much of fundamental importance has to be undertaken by the Government in India to strengthen and broaden the foundations on which the Self-employed people have been functioning in our economy. This attitude of indifference appears all the more glaring when we study the recommendations and the plans and projects it has made and the funds it has provided for the promotion of huge industrial concerns owned and operated by big

capitalists, as well as for the improvement of the condition of the industrial proletariat working in the Private and Public Sectors. It has also allotted immense sums for the betterment and benefit of the official and clerical cadres working in State Concerns and Government Offices.

In striking contrast with this the Commission's attitude towards the Self-employed people has been at times cold and at times definitely hostile. It has assumed that Self-employed people like the peasants, artisans, shopkeepers and retail traders from part and parcel of the private sector and that, therefore, they do not need any special protection or encouragement. The hostile attitude of the Commission towards these simple folk can plainly be seen from its design to transform them into wage-earners and merge them in the proletariat. This design has caused and is causing disastrous deviation of national effort and resources in destructive and reactionary directions. In particular, I may point out the Commission's design to transform the peasants into wage-earners by the device of co-operative farms. The apparent technique is to take away from the peasants their status of proprietorship, camouflaging the fact of deprivation with a facade of share certificates and then to carry out the process of transmutation by the usual methods. Then the status of the peasants would be openly and unabashedly equated with that of the landless rural folk. This, I may hasten to warn, is a foredoomed attempt.

In view of this failure of the Planning commission to comprehend the inherent merit of this institution of Self-employed and in view of its

alternating attitudes of indifference and hostility to these people, I plead for a reclassification of our Economy into four sectors:— (1) The Public Sector, (2) Private Capitalist Sector, (3) The Self-employed Peoples' Sector and (4) The Complimentary Sector of Co-operation. Such a classification will correspond more accurately to the facts and realities of the situation in our country. It will facilitate clear thinking on the subject and a more accurate assessment of the possibilities and significance of different sectors. It will also facilitate better formulation of policies of co-operation, direction, and co-ordination of the activities and functions of the different sectors.

Importance of the Self-employed Peoples' Sector

There are two types of planning — total planning and partial planning. Total planning necessitates the total elimination of private enterprise and leads to a regimented and centrally directed society. Partial planning ushers in a type of mixed economy in which private enterprise flourishes and governmental help, guidance, control and regulation. Any scheme of total planning worth its name, starts with the provision of full employment. Under such a scheme the quantum of remuneration for work is of no consideration whatsoever, so long as it suffices to keep together the body and soul of the worker. The most urgent consideration is to find some work for every citizen and to give him some wage so as to prevent starvation and demoralization. Partial planning assumes no such responsibilities for full employment. It relies on the existing social and economic institutions to fulfil this vital function

of preventing starvation and demoralization. It *devotes its limited* resources to primary and fundamental developmental activities. We know that there are more than three crores of unemployed people in India. This is a force large enough to precipitate a ruinous revolution, or in the alternative to cause country-wide demoralization of an intensity that could easily undermine social cohesion and ruin all moral values in the country. The miracle is that such a contingency has not materialised. The Planning Commission has done nothing to forestall or prevent it. It has done nothing to mitigate the stresses and sufferings of the unemployed.

What is the explanation for this miraculous socio-economic phenomenon? For this miraculous placidity and patience of these unemployed hordes, our society should be grateful to the contribution of the Self-employed sector in India. The system of Self-employment enables most of its votaries to find some modicum of employment for themselves and provide some kind and quantity of maintenance for their families. These families are mostly joint families. So the meagre earnings of the head of the family keep alive a number of adults of wage-earning age. Family affection and consideration of family prestige are the motive forces of this socio-economic conduct. The able-bodied adults do not lapse into crime and vice partly because of the restraint resulting from family pride and prestige, and partly because of the social direction and control of the earning member of the family.

This is how the explosion is being prevented. This is how the Self-employed Sector has been

functioning as a sedative and an alleviator of the suffering and demoralization that generally result from continued unemployment.

Thus we see that these self-employed people are making heroic efforts to find their own employment and add to national production. If these peasants were to give up their present status of self-employment, self-reliance and responsibility for family employment, maintenance and social discipline, the planners and governments would be obliged to provide what would be almost unmanageable, by way of administrative machinery including labour management and conciliation set-ups. The state would then have to organise employment for all the hundreds of millions of what are now Self-employed people. It would have to organise training for their avocations and provide for their managerial needs. It would have to provide unemployment relief, social security, workmens' compensation etc. That would be a colossal task, which could only be undertaken by a dictatorship and we know that a dictatorship, with all its inevitable concomitants and accompaniments of ruthlessness, callousness and liquidation proceedings is as unthinkable in our situation as it is unnecessary. The present peasant economy saves our planners and government from all such onerous responsibilities and ordeals.

The self-employed people not only ensure the success of democratic planning but can also strengthen the democratic moorings of a planned society. That is, their sector is the best guarantee of the functioning and progress of a Free Society with full-fledged democracy.

If through a planned and democratic society, we expect to eliminate institutions and practices of exploitation and thus achieve social justice and socialism, then the self-employed status and economy of small-entrepreneurs, as represented by peasants and artisans are just the effective means needed to achieve such a democratic socialist Society.

It would be wrong for our planners to allow the Leninist prejudice against peasants as the last of the Capitalist elements, to colour their approach to the problems of peasantry. Peasants are basically non-exploitative. They would also be wrong to allow the puranic and professionals' prejudices against manual toilers ever achieving parity with the favoured classes of intellectual and commercial rulers and entrepreneurs to stand in the way of peasants and artisans retaining and strengthening their self-employed status in the development of our Socialist Society based, as it must be, on freedom from "bossism" and on fair-play. The self-employed masses are the decentralised, multipurpose and socio-economic units in our society and can play that role progressively in the projected Socialist Society. Planned economy is needed most by them and it can render them effective help by accepting them as units integrated democratically within a socialist planned economy. They can also serve as the best bulwark for both democracy and socialism.

Many more merits of the system of Self-employment can be listed. In particular it may be mentioned that this system strengthens the democratic moorings of a planned society. It reduces to the minimum economic exploitation; Decentralisation of Industry which is so much appreciated

in our country is inherent in the system of Self-employment. Planning and co-operation, which are the most valued and beloved devices of modern economic theory, constitute, so to speak, the two wheels of the chariot of Self-employment. But the regrettable fact is that there is not even a trace of appreciation on the part of our planners of this great contribution of the Self-employed people to the maintenance and development of our social economy.

The Self-employed Peoples' Sector *Vis-a-Vis* The Private Capitalist Sector

It is high time to realise that the method and manner of approach adopted by the Planning Commission in dealing with the private capitalist sector is not at all suited to deal with the Self-employed Peoples' Sector. The special feature of Capitalist system is the assurance of freedom to the ruthless enterpreneur and the denial of it to the great mass of employees. On the other hand the distinguishing characteristic of the system of Self-employment is the assurance of freedom, initiative and self-respect for all its votaries. Capitalism leads to the concentration of economic power in the hands of the few. Self-employment deffuses it among the greatest possible number of people. A very important characteristic of social, economic or political power may be noted in this context. Concentration of power in the hands of a few people breeds arrogance, irresponsibility and tyranny in the holders thereof, while its diffusion among a large number of people, transforms it into a benevolent agency.

So far, the capitalist enterpreneurs have successfully prevented any ceilings to be placed on their holdings of shares and other properties. The peasants, who constitute the largest component of the Self-employed Sector, have accepted the principle of ceiling on their holdings, and have been vainly demanding that it should be imposed on other types of incomes and properties of non-agricultural classes also. The Capitalists have been powerful enough to vie with the state and keep the public Sector at bay. The peasants have been generous, and public-spirited enough to accept what are really unremunerative and unfair prices for agricultural products in glaring contrast to the successful efforts of manufacturers to demand and obtain excessively high prices for manufactured goods. Peasants have whole-heartedly co-operated with the government at great cost to themselves in the matter of supplying the nation with cheap food. The great capitalists and enterpreneurs on the other hand, have disabled and frustrated the government in many ways by squandering our limited amounts of foreign currencies. The activities of these captains of Industry and Trade, have subverted and riddled both the pattern of production and of consumption which are implicit in the concept of a socialistic pattern of society. Therefore there is a qualitative difference between the Private Capitalist Sector and the Self-employed Peoples' Sector. These two sectors must be viewed as distinctive and separate and dealt with as such.

Let our planners beware of the immense losses that our nation would have to sustain by refusing to distinguish these self-employed people from capitalists and by having to overcome their natural

and inevitable opposition to all such plans and programmes which are calculated to subvert their self-employed status and economy. Let them not vainly attempt to twist and turn them into either capitalist or proletariat. It would be advantageous for under-developed countries to trust them as allies, deserving from them sympathetic consideration and maximum socialistic sympathies and not to alienate them. After all, what socialism of the best type in a democratic society should aim at and would need are decentralisation to the maximum degree and the smallest practicable units of production and distribution. Such units can be approximated with peasants and artisans. It is the good fortune of India and other oriental and under-developed countries that they possess even to-day a large number of such units of production on so wide a sector of their social economy functioning under their influence, despite the two centuries long onslaught by Western Industrialist Imperialism. However these long-neglected self-employed people deserve some urgent assistance from our planned economy. That is, co-operative co-ordination, abundant credit and essential supplies needed for their productive activities through co-operatives and cheapened, efficient and all comprehensive and fully developed socio-economic infra-structure have to be assured to this sector. However it would be found that on balance, the total amount of capital and other factors of production and distribution needed by this sector is comparatively the most economical and the least burdensome. Our planners would also discover, if only they make a friendly approach to this sector, that every unit of national resources devoted to the protection and development of this will yeild in increasing returns on a large scale.

Government's duty to the Self-employed

Government should recognise and accept the 'Self-employed Peoples' Sector' as a vital and permanent factor in our national life. It should take steps to modernise the techniques of production employed by the Self-employed people. It must take steps to raise the technical efficiency and cultural level of these people.

In particular, the results of modern scientific discoveries must be pressed into service in the matter of preventing soil erosion and building up soil fertility. Methods and practices of irrigation and drainage have to be modernised and brought upto-date. Facilities for irrigation and drainage have to be provided on a scale required by modern agrosmic practices. Tested seeds of improved varieties of crops and chemical manures have to be made available to the peasants at appropriate times and places and at cheap prices.

Government should take steps to provide the necessary institutional frame-work for the economic and cultural life of the rural areas where the bulk of the self-employed people live and work. For instance the country side must be provided with a net work of ware-houses, roads, navigable canals and feeder railways. It should be served by chains of banks, post-offices, libraries, schools, hospitals and demonstration farms and laboratories. The Government should build up a special organisation for providing the rural sector with the much needed credit facilities with special emphasis on co-operative credit. It should develop a chain of Rural Co-operative Stores to supply the country - side with consumer goods classed as necessaries and producers'

goods needed by peasants, artisans and other people engaged in rural industries.

It should be recognised that at least for the next two five-year plan periods, the multipurpose rural co-operatives would be requiring vast amounts of capital for the construction of godowns, warehouses and processing concerns and that, consequently they would not be able to supply even 50% of the total credit requirements of agriculturists and other rural producers. So the Self-employed sector will have to continue to depend on capitalistic enterprise for serving them to that extent. Therefore steps necessary to regulate, stabilise and control this capitalistic enterprise have to be taken in the form of money lenders regulation Acts. The Reserve Bank and the State Bank would have to provide Money Lenders on the one hand and Retail Shopkeepers on the other with some financial assistance on the security of stocks or otherwise.

Censuses of the quantum of employment available to the self-employed people from their main sources of employment as well as from associated occupations, will have to be taken from time to time — at least once in every three years. The statistical information thus collected should be made available to all prospective entrents to life and their parents and guardians at every village centre.

Index numbers for the cost of production of all the articles of daily importance as well as for the cost of living should be benefit up and kept up-to-date. In the light of the trends revealed by such Index numbers the policies of the government should be reorientated approximately.

The housing needs of the rural people have to be systamatically estimated. Model plans for different types of houses for agricultural workers, artisans and peasants have to be prepared. The requirements of the peasants for cattle-sheds and barens, have to be estimated. The purpose of these estimates is to provide the necessary physical and financial allotments for them as well as to give the peasant in the matter.

Such of the other aids as are already indicated in the five year plans have to be reorientated and further developed on a scale commensurate with the new awareness of these self-employed people. The niggardly financial provision made by the planners in the past has greatly increased the lag in the development of these self-employed people. The Planning Commission must now make amends for its past neglect in this matter.

A Schedule of Rural Industries

Two problems of grave importance confront the Self-employed Peoples' Sector— the problem of raising the standard of life of these lowly, modest and industrious people, and the problem of providing employment for the new entrants into the stream of employment every year. These problems can be solved by encouraging intensive agriculture and by reserving certain industries closely allied to agricultural as well as a number of other selected industries to the people of the Self-employed sector. Horticulture, Sericulture, vegitable and fruit growing are types of intensive agriculture. Cattle-breeding, dairy-farming, poultry-keeping, bee-keeping, food

processing are instances of allied industries. As for the other industries that should be reserved to this Sector, a Committee should be appointed to prepare a schedule of industries suited for reservation for development and employment to this sector.

To indicate the possibilities in this direction I may mention the food-processing industry and the textile industry and point out how they would benefit the self-employed people. It is estimated that in Western countries processing and preparation of agricultural products absorbs more than 40% of the price paid by the ultimate consumer. So if this industry is reserved to the rural sector, it can greatly augment rural incomes and substantially raise the rural peoples' standard of life. Similarly production of coarse and medium type of cloth needed for home consumption can be made a rural industry.

The method of reseving certain cottage and medium-scale industries to rural people should be employed as a part of the Policy of dispersing industries evenly throughout the length and breadth of the country. Thus, as far as practicable every group of villages must be helped to become an economically sufficient unit. The objective is to localise employment opportunities and additional earnings and to prevent the emergence of the phenomena of geographical disparity in division of labour and the localisation of certain industries in certain villages.

I mention these points at length and in detail because the Government has been so far very indifferent to the needs of these self - employed people. Examples of such indifference can easily be

multiplied. But let us content ourselves with a few. Our planners have taken nine years to realise the primacy of the need of supplying tested seeds to the peasant, if production is to be increased appreciably. The Government has taken such a long time to realise that betterment taxes should not be imposed for the first five or ten years upon lands newly brought under cultivation.

But I am advocating this theory of self-employment as a means to solve some of the difficulties arising from the special Socio-economic conditions of our country. The most pressing problem of India is to provide immediate employment to millions of families. A day without employment is for them, a day of starvation. Unemployment under modern conditions leads to suicides, crimes and depravity. That is why in densely populated countries where every inch of land is owned and enclosed, every bird and beast that can be made game, is owned and guarded, the right to labour is given particular recognition. In such countries, if the Government fails to provide employment, it offers unemployment doles to the unemployed. But the Government of India is not in a position either to provide full employment or to offer the unemployment dole. So I suggest that the potentialities of the indigenous institution of self - employment be pressed into service. Let it also be clearly understood that the system of Self-employment has inherent merits which have enabled it to stand the test of time.

CHAPTER II

Role of the Co-operatives

Man is a rational being. But once he goes to the extreme and tries to go on reasoning pros and cons on every tiny action, controlling or suppressing his natural emotions and instincts, life becomes mechanised and the emotions and instincts lose their own natural charm and one becomes unhappy to that extent, although one has the satisfaction of planning one's own life. To avoid such an evil consequence, he should consciously organise his instincts and emotions only upto some degree and then leave scope for free play to make his life worth-while. But the freedom to be enjoyed in the exercise of one's instincts, emotions and intuitive activities should not go to the extent of becoming so anarchical as to defeat the very objective of life. So every one has to cultivate some rational habits (in relation to the objective) consciously in the beginning which can be following unconsciously later on. Such habits, borne out of consciously felt needs, would come to have effective impac on those autonomous instincts so as to help them to voluntarily play their role more

or less rationally on every occasion and in every situation. Thus he seeks to attain his optimum happiness by being rational, and at the same time, by not drying up, the natural flow of his emotional and instinctive activity. The same approach will do good to any country in its efforts at planning to achieve its optimum. Government may consciously plan, organise and direct, with advantage, social and public activities only to a certain extent, leaving the rest of the economy for the free-play of individual freedom and its capacity to enrich and embellish social economy. It may simultaneously be busy developing certain institutions which play the same role in social economy as what rational habits do in the actions of an individual.

In the system of economic relationships, competition arises because of scarcity and whole some spirit of rivalry and ennulation whole co-operation arises because of inter-dependence. Co-operation based on inter-dependence is no less a fundamental relationship than is competition. Both competition and co-operation are socially useful elements and are inescapable. It is their existence and inter-action that maintain the stability of our social economy.

These considerations lead us to reorient the conception of socialistic society and to visualise new means of reaching our objective.

While the State is allowed to own and control the strategic sectors of economy, individuals have been left with the freedom of owning property and catering to the social needs of production, consumption and occupation. But if this free

economy does not co-operate with the State, and vice-versa, there can be no planned development. The State should not directly encroach on the freedom of private entrepreneurs in the so-called private sector and self-employed sector if only to plan effectively.

If we develop a net work of voluntary institutions which can mobilise all the autonomus economic units such as the self-employed peasants and artisans and cottage and medium-scale industrial units within its fold we can then influence them to move along and co-operate to the maximum extent with the State in fulfilling the planned targets. This will become possible when these Sectors are obliged to follow the rules of the game prescribed by the democratic State. The State has to infuse into these sectors the necessary social motive and induce them to reap the maximum benefits of the inter-dependent relationship of the social economy and share them with the rest of the Society. Since the capitalist sector is too much under the influence of the competitive elements, it has to be counter-balanced by the development of the co-operative tendencies and institutions, especially to safe-guard and promote the interests of the self - employed sections and consumers.

The best institution which satisfies the above needs, is the Co-operative. This institution in our context can neither be equated with the co-operative of the collectivist economy where formal freedom is being maintained although the source of it (private property) fulfilling a social function and self-employed status had been cut off and where that freedom cannot be more than a freedom of discretion

of the Government employee or officer nor can it be equated with the co-operatives of the capitalist countries which are obliged to work in competition with capitalist ventures and without the active sympathy and support of the State. The structure of this institution is being developed in different countries in such a way as to suit their differing needs and social environments.

So the co-operative has an important positive role to play even during our transition towards the socialistic economy. In the first stage, it must grow as a neutral force to maintain the necessary balance of power in the developing economy between public and private sectors and as a prop to the self-employed sector and then in the second stage it must work as a controller of both public as well as private sectors and as an ally of the self-employed sector and in the final stage it may come to replace the private sector in many regions of economic activity.

And the structure of a co-operative would be enlarged during the process step by step in the light of experience in such a way that it allows the necessary freedoms, and initiatives and incentives so badly needed for the healthy growth and functioning of a progressive society maintaining the maximum possible decentralisation as is instinct with the self-employed sector and at the same time, satisfying the demands of planned economy. It should avoid the temptation to invite the trojan-horse of co-partnership of governmental agents and keep itself free from factions, political or social schisms. It should also take special care not to put itself in opposition to the life giving springs of democratic society namely, the self-employed sec-

tions. It is here that we can take lessons from the experience of democratic countries like Norway, Denmark, Sweeden, Switzerland, Japan, and Paragvay etc. Its growth is a complementary means to the other means we have visualised.

Co-operative movement may possibly be looked at, as in the past, as a competitor to certain aspects of public sector and also to the capitalist sector. It can only be the best ally and bulwark of self-employed sector, for, without it, the peasants and artisans would be incomplete units almost in suspended animation in modern society.

We should guard ourselves against such ill-conceived effort as is envisaged by the planners of posing the co-operatives as an alternative to the self-employed peasant and turning him into an enemy. The most effective role for co-operatives in agriculture and cottage industries is to buttress and energise the self-employed family units of production by relieving them of the present onerous responsibilities in obtaining credit and organising marketing for which they are the least equipped. If, on the other hand, the planners try to look upon such family units as merely of temporary consequence, to be replaced by co-operatives they would be playing an anti-democratic and reactionary role. Social and democratic progress can be achieved with the minimum of social friction if the co-operative movement is helped to look upon the self-employed family units of production as its most important friends and constituents deserving sympathy and support. Therefore it is not the Co-operative Farming but the Service Co-operatives which can win the peasant as an ally and as a source of

strength. It is their marriage and not divorce that can ensure social progress.

So, our national planners should recognise the need for classifying the social economy as represented by the activities, and contributions of our peasants and artisans, who form such a predominant percentage of India's population, as a separate Social and Economic Sector. As and when more and more of the "Key Services" needed by the self-employed come to be organised on a co-operative basis as is being done so far as the hand-loom weavers are concerned the capitalist sector would loose its hold almost to a corresponding degree over modern society. Similarly, the public sector can also come to devolve some of its functions to the co-operatives, catering to the needs of these self-employed peoples. In conclusion, this is the one sector, that of the self.employed peoples which can hope to lead our Society, towards democratic socialist society based on freedom, social justice and non-exploitative economy.

1. Production would increase with the growth of Service co-operatives in the sector of the self-employed people.

2. Wastage can be reduced and exploitation of the self-employed masses can be eliminated and better and cheaper servicing of the self-employed people can be ensured with the replacement of private enterprise in "Key Services" by the Service Co-operatives.

3. Savings can be mobilised with the expansion of the co-operatives and ploughed back

into the development of co-operative production, organised for processing primary produce.

4. Production and consumption trends can be scientifically assessed and planned in advance with the aid of Co-operative Stores, and marketing organisations and Service Co-operatives and processing establishments.

5. The economic results of emphasis on the development of basic industries can come to be matched by the growth of co-operative sector.

6. It is an efficient institution to solve the unemployment problem in a developing economy.

The implementation of this policy is being demanded not only by our objective but also by our situation. The present deplorable conditions of the self-employed peasants, artisans and their unemployment and under-employment can be tackled most effectively through the co-operative movement so long as it does not seek to destroy or undermine the self-employed status, proprietorship of the holding.

CHAPTER III

Food Front

The demand for greater food production:

"The much desired maximization of local agricultural production and minimization of food imports cannot be achieved if the Government does not abandon its present attitude of suspicion and hostility towards our peasants."

"It is most unfortunate that Government blames our peasants for low production per acre of food grains, while it persists in its failure to implement the recommendations made by successive Commissions and Committees which have reported on this matter, as to how to increase food production; namely the fixation and enforcement of minimum and remunerative levels of prices of rice and wheat. While Government recognises the need to provide incentives for higher and better production to industrial workers and industrialists, it fails to realise the need to do the same when it comes to peasants who form more than half of our active

and productive toilers. The Pay Commission was appointed soon after Independence and its suggestions as to what facilities should be afforded by way of higher salaries, and allowances, and better conditions of service were implemented. Even interim relief has been preferred, while the Second Pay Commission is at work, in order to appease the Government employees, but the most important recommendation of the much advertised Ashok Mehata's Commission for creating the machinery to afford remunerative price levels to peasants has been cold shouldered. If there could be a more glaring example of discrimination against peasants, it could only be the continuous pressure of Central Government upon State Governments to impose ceilings on land-holdings of peasants, while refusing, in its turn, to impose similar ceilings on salaries of Government servants and incomes of professional classes of the urban areas.

Campaign of Vilification:

Regarding the unholy efforts of certain political elements to prejudice the consumers of food grains, in urban and rural areas, I wish to assure all the consumers, that neither peasants nor those of us who champion their cause wish to demand of them anything more than they wish to ask for themselves regarding their own respective professions and productive activities to gain their own livelihood. All we ask is the guarantee of remunerative price levels to assure us atleast the minimum of decent standard of living–certainly of the same level as is vouchsafed to skilled workers in factories and offices. Surely our consumers cannot complain, in all fairness, against this most reasonable demand,

while they are continually successful to gain satisfaction to their rising demands for higher remuneration in keeping with the rising costs of living and higher conceptions of decent life.

Stabilization of Prices :

I wish to assure our consumers that peasants are also interested in the stabilization of prices of food grains and in the minimization of the margins between the prices paid by them and received by peasants. What our peasants desire is not so much profits as a decent living. They are not profiteers nor are they hoarders. All they want is to be freed from the risks and vicissitudes of markets and price fluctuations. They ask Government to think of them as its greatest allies and co-operating partners in serving the community and not as enemies. They want to be assured that once their crops are harvested, their marketable produce is taken off their hands by some Social Agency, over which they too can have an effective control and whatever is received for their produce from consumers over the whole year is distributed among them in accordance with the principles of distribution of Co-operative Dividends. Such an Agency should not be a profit-earning one. It should be run on a no-profit and no loss basis, purely for the benefit of producers and community as a whole.

Food Subsidy :

I am all in favour of the State undertaking the responsibility of subsidizing food prices, so far

as the submarginal or vulnerable groups of consumers are concerned. Government has accepted this principle but is devoting the ear-marked sum, Rs. 25/- crores, in purchasing imported food grains at higher prices and selling them at lower prices in our country, through what are called "FAIR PRICE SHOPS", and thus seeking to achieve the anti-peasant purpose of keeping down domestic food prices at an uneconomic level. Our peasants are opposed to this anti-social policy of Government. Our consumers also ought to oppose this policy because, it discourages our peasants and weakens their incentives to produce more, and thus delays the achievement of the much-sought after maximization of food production and its consequent cheapening of food grains.

Therefore there is urgent need for re-orienting the Government policy of subsidizing food. This subsidy of twenty five crores ought to be trebled in all conscience to be utilised in buying our home-grown food grains at prices which would be remunerative to peasants and selling it at reasonably lower and cheaper prices to our vulnerable and submarginal sections of people. I wish to warn Government that until and unless this minimum social function is undertaken by it, all its over-growing costly propaganda, punitive and other campaigns for greater production will not benefit consumers or producers nor can the nation be taken anywhere near the solution of our food problem.

The recent policy of selective credit control :

The recent developments make us fear that everything that has been recommended by so many

of us and demanded by the peasant movement during the past thirty years is now sought to be undone by the Swaraj Government ostensibly on the advice of the Planning Commission. This policy can only shackle our peasants and get them into control of Governments to subserve the urban and industrial interest. We want the Banks to advance credit on the security of peasants' grain stocks. But Government and Reserve Bank has recently managed, through the State Bank and scheduled Banks, not to allow peasants to sell those apothecated grain stocks except through the authorised procurement agents and at the procurement prices. Can there be a better warning to our peasants not to seek the assistance of Banks, if they wish to escape from Government's strangle-hold ? How can the recent Government's efforts to organise directly 400 large-scale ware-houses and encourage co-operatives to organise many thousands of small-scale ware-houses, with adequate financial resources to advance credit to peasants on the security of food-grains deposited in them, become popular among peasants, if their customers are to be victimised in this manner by the Government's procurement agents ? How will it ever be possible for Government to discourage the costly private money lending, if our peasants are forced to resort to private money-lenders, in their frantic efforts to avoid the evil tentacles of the Banks and their masters, the Government and Reserve Bank ?

It is high time that our Planners and Government change their attitude towards our peasants, from one of hostility and suspicion to one of friendliness and partnership and use their powers and growing contact with peasants, to prove to them

that every new state activity is intended primarily for their benefit. Certainly, consumers should be served and protected but not at the expense of peasants and it is the duty of society as a whole to serve and protect both equally and wholeheartedly.

The recent Food price control policy :

What has happened during the past two years in Andhra should serve as a warning to peasants all over India. To benefit the consumers in Kerala and other Southern States, the export of rice from Andhra to their customary markets in Calcutta and Bombay were banned. Procurement prices were fixed at arbitrarily uneconomic levels, without even consulting the Andhra Government and in disregard to the slightly higher levels suggested by them. One of the results was heavy losses to factory owners who had had to purchase paddy at much higher levels, as admitted by the Government and also to many sections of peasants who had to sell away their surplus paddy, once they learnt that Government was taking such anti-peasant steps. Another result was that the price paid to Andhra rice came to be the lowest in all the zones, as boasted of by Government, to the detriment of Andhra peasants and Rice Merchants and Factories. The Railway authorities were prevented to move all the food grains that private trade was anxious to sell to places outside the zone, even after supplying the stipulated quantities to the zonal consumers. Then came the ban on the Banks, Co-operative or otherwise not to release the grain apothecated with them, except at procurement prices and to authorised agents. The Andhra consumers suffered so bitterly from higher prices which resulted from the strike

organised by the Factories. Thus the noose was spread tightly around the Andhra Rice Trade and Peasants. There arose thus a virtual Soviet like hide and seek struggle between Government and Factories and their principals, the peasants. The only saving grace was that the Kerala Government tried to weaken this noose by trying to purchase Andhra Rice directly in Andhra at the slightly higher market prices and the Andhra Government did not close the roads also for movements of rice.

All the efforts of Andhra Public and peasant movement were in vain, to make the Union Government pursue the wise policy of fixing the procurement price at remunerative levels, constituting a pool for the receipt of payments from consuming states made at different levels for various sorts of rice and in various seasons over and above the minimum procurement price and distributing the resulting surplus - if any - among the Factories and peasants in accordance with their supplies. Even the suggestions made by the Food Grains Prices Commission were not heeded. The result is the colossal loss to the tune of tens of crores to the Andhra peasants and their loss of faith in the democratic and peasant—wise bonafides of the Government.

The latest Government moves to appoint official agents, whether Factory-owners or otherwise, to purchase rice from factories and peasants at procurement prices only and to fix those price-levels without obtaining the concurrence of the Andhra Government and without any consultations with the accredited representatives of peasant movement, and factory-owners, can only land Government in the vicious coils of the "Control Regime" and pit

against all the peasants and give powers to officials to extract their unholy profits at the cost of the public. Another danger also is in the offing; the likelihood of Government empowering factory owners and other authorised agents of Government to exploit poor peasants, to oblige self-reliant and surplus-producing peasants to sell their small surpluses on the sly at remunerative prices and thus run the risk of being unjustly accused as black-marketeers. All those thousands of small shop-keepers and travelling salesmen who perform most essential function of buying tiny quantities of food grains from peasants and selling them to consumers in villages and towns will come to be branded as unsocial elements and thus be exploited by police, and really unsocial forces in our society. Therefore it is most essential that Government should not monopolise the whole of the business in the sale, transport and purchase of paddy and rice. It should confine itself to the procurement upto its own needs either directly from peasants or indirectly from factory-owners and merchants without upsetting the rest of market transactions. It should purchase such quantities of paddy and rice as are required from time to time either at market prices or at procurement levels of prices and such prices should have been accepted by local Government and peasant movement as remunerative and reasonable. All this should be done pending the long desired stabilization of prices.

Land Reforms:

Regarding the raging campaign for the so-called Land Reforms from the Congress and other platforms, I consider it my duty to ask our public

to make their mind as to what exactly they want. If they wish to help our landless agriculturists to obtain possession of some small-holdings and thus become self-employed peasants, the foremost thing to do is to sink enough capital in the development of Government owned lands and allot them to these people according to some order of priority to locals and outsiders. In Andhra alone, there is as much as forty lakhs of acres of such land; and in the whole country, crores of acres of such land is available for allotment to the landless agriculturists. Instead of undertaking this constructive and yet revolutionary project, why is the Andhra Government being prodded to undertake the land ceiling legislation which can at best yield only two or three lakhs of acres, for which compensation has to be paid and at the cost of so much unmerited social-upset and discouragement to investments in agriculture as a whole. If they want actual cultivators to be benefited, then the right thing to do is to pass Tenancy (protection) legislation even in regard to Patta lands of big peasants and enforce it in such a way as to give effective protection to both the tenants and peasant proprietors. Andhra, Bombay, West Bengal have already had such legislation and if need be, it may be amended suitably, especially to minimise litigation. If it is desired that there should be no large section of absentee-landholders owning too large holdings which they cannot conveniently cultivate, then Government might give warning to all such landholders that their tenants would be given the option, to purchase all such lands, either at market prices or at such prices as might be prescribed according to the procedure of Land Acquisition Act and also give them the option of claiming a portion of such lands

for own cultivation within a prescribed period after passing such legislation. The Planning Commission has already recommended that physically disabled landholders, widows, orphans, members of the Defence Forces should be exempted from such disability, and whole-time public workers, including members of legislatures might also be given the same or similar protection.

If the objective is to prevent any large accretions of landholdings, ceilings on future growth of landholdings through purchases or inheritance or gifts might be banned. If, however, the full objective is to see that there are no properties in land beyond a particular limit, yielding a specified income at the present price-levels, then, the fundamental question arises as to why landholdings alone should be singled out, especially when such holdings are owner — cultivated and the tenants, where such function, are suitably protected ; It is because we are convinced that the price-levels of all goods are fast rising and the income-levels of all classes, especially of the professionals and urban classes are rising much faster than in any sector of agrarian economy, we wonder why Government is unwilling to put any ceiling on those incomes and their properties. Let Governments make a gesture in the direction of Social Justice by implementing the recommendation of the First Pay Commission and Planning Commission by fixing a ceiling upon the salaries of Government employees whose numbers have been more than doubled since the advent of National Freedom and also of all professional employees and then alone approach agriculturists to prove its bonafides. If not, would it be proper for all fair-minded people to expect us to accept ceilings on

landholders alone in the name of Social Justice. This question of ceilings on land cannot be, need not be, treated as a part of land reform at all. This fixation of ceilings is not intended to benefit rural economy or food production or as such, nor can it be demanded to remove any demonstrable grievance or deprivation of right of any section of agriculturists. In fact, land is much more evenly distributed, especially in the Ryotwari areas and after the abolition of Zamindari system, thanks to the *Mitakshari* system of inheritance than any other form of property. Therefore, those of us who have demanded for long that such ceilings should be placed on all incomes from all occupations are so much shocked by this one-sided and anti-peasant campaign of our Planning Commission and political parties that we are tempted to oppose this campaign and ask our leaders to give further thought to this important matter. Let them realise that this ceiling cannot be pressed to achieve any such special purpose as higher production, because the insecurity engendered by this campaign is likely to affect adversely the productive efforts of all sections of land-owning cultivators.

If however Government and Planners are determined to select our peasants alone as the first batch of sacrificial goats in this national campaign for Socialism of the Soviet-cum-Capitalist brand, which has been traditionally so anti-peasant, we are clear in our minds that the ceiling ought not to be expressed in terms of cash, because the value of Rupee is fast falling, thanks to deficit financing and Plan expenditure etc. and also because, such a cash-limit would dwarf the enterprise and initiative of go-ahead peasants to introduce intensive cultivation,

produce such protective produce as fruits and develop seri-culture, horticulture, vegetable and cattle-feed and other specialised production. Therefore we want the limit to be prescribed in terms of standard acres and that limit should be such as to yield atleast Rs. 500/- per mensem for a peasant's family of one adult and one or two dependants. Surely none can take exception to the ambition of a peasant to continue to have or rise to gain a monthly income of Rs. 500/- as his maximum, when his fellow worker, who is still a wage-earner is being helped by all the labour protection legislation with all the backing of the I. L. O. to rise to that status. Indeed, the proletariat are, in addition being assured of State-sponsored housing accommodation and all the costly civic amenities of our labour Colonies, at an ever rising tempo and which are as yet far beyond the dreams of our peasants.

I have recently visited a large number of Government's industrial and Defence Ordinance enterprises (Hindustan Aircraft, Indian Telephones, Bharat Electronics, Hindustan Machine Tools, Hindustan Anti-Biotics, Integrated Coach Factory etc.) in different parts of India and studied the conditions of work, pay, training, promotion, housing and social insurance and other amenities provided and protection afforded from physical and social accidents for the so-called unskilled and skilled workers, and I can say that the social and economic prospects made available for them by our Government are far better and costlier than what the biggest land-holding peasants can come to have, even if a monthly income of Rs. 500/- is allowed to be obtained by them through their own cultivation

efforts. Have our planners any reasonable objection to this minimum demand of ours ?

Let our Congress leaders and rank and file give their best unprejudiced thought to these considerations and remember that it was the peasant masses who have trusted them, in preference to the avowedly anti-peasant parties and who have therefore placed them in Governments, in the hope that they would only promote their just rights and would not pursue the communistic methods of liquidating peasants by direct or indirect political moves. It is also the duty of our peasants to awaken themselves and develop their organisation to safeguard their coveted self-employed status, their beloved holdings which are their life-line for freedom and employment and independent living.

APPENDIX I

Bharat Kisan Convention's Call

The All India Kisan Convention which has met in New Delhi on 14—12—'58 has reminded the Public that the All India Kisan Sammelan has been giving its thought for many years, especially, since the publication of the Minority Report signed by Shri O. P. Ramaswamy Reddiar and Rangaji of the Congress Agrarian Reforms Committee to the vital question of the advisability or otherwise of ceilings on land holdings and has published its conclusion boldly that it would certainly favour the conception of ceilings on all incomes and properties as a part and parcel of the achievement and application of the conception of social justice in a welfare State. But the convention regrets to observe that the main Political Parties have only been demanding ceilings on agricultural incomes and properties alone and have either opposed or soft-pedalled the demand for imposition of similar or any kind of ceilings on all types and sectors of non-agricultural incomes and properties derived especially from urban, industrial, commercial and Governmental professions which are

immensely larger. It regrets that the Union Government has set its face against the imposition of such ceilings even on urban and professional incomes above Rs. 2500/— per mensem or Rs. 30,000/— per annum per person, but yet its leaders and the Planning Commission are constantly pressing - a pressure bordering on political coercion - the State Governments to impose ceilings on agricultural incomes and see that such ceilings should not be above Rs. 3600/— per annum per family. This Convention warns the Public and Government that their persistence and as also of the urban and professional peoples upon this inequitous and coercive pressure upon agriculturists alone, to the exclusion of all non-agricultural incomes and properties are bound to be considered as the unmistakeable evidence of their special antagonism and discrimination against the big but helpless class of peasants of this country. Therefore, this convention appeals to Government and the Planning Commission to take urgent measures to impose similar ceilings (upon at least any one section of urban and professional peoples) and especially Government servants before they impose such ceilings on agricultural incomes in order to establish their bonafides of impartiality and real faith in social justice. If, however, they continue to persevere in their present unjust political campaign against peasants by imposing the ceilings only on them to the exclusion of all other classes this Convention deems it its duty to warn them that all the agriculturists would be justified to draw their own conclusions in regard to their faith in such political forces.

This Convention is definitely of the view that it is in the interests of National economy and progressive agriculture and expanding agricultural

production and efficiency that peasants and their youth should be assured that the most enterprising hard working and skilled sections of them should be able to obtain an income of upto Rs. 500/— per mensem per adult male worker according to the present day price index from their utilisation in the most scientific and efficient manner of such of their holdings as can today yield that much income. The Convention is thus asking only for minimum justice and scope for the display of initiative, industry, efficiency and skill and the utilisation of the best methods of agriculture by the most enterprising peasants in the cultivation of their present holdings. This convention. therefore, cautions all peasants all over India that they should be vigilent at this juncture in safeguarding the rights and opportunities available not only for the best skilled and most industrious among them of this present generation, but also of the generations to come and to be fore-warned that unless they demand and obtain this minimum of equal treatment and social justice on a par with other classes, not only the present generation, but also the future generations of peasants will become dwarfed, weakened and socially, economically and politically ineffective and powerless. This Convention, therefore, appeals to all organisations interested in the agriculturists and claiming to cater to their interests to carry on nationwide campaign against the one-sided and anti-peasants policy of the Planning Commission and be prepared to take all protective steps in a nonviolent and organised manner to secure that equal social justice is meted out to them as with all other classes of people.

Project Self-employed Peasants

This Convention is convinced that the Family Farm Economy of our peasants is based upon the Socialistic and Gandhian principles of Social Justice, non-exploitation, self-governance and decentralization in economic life. All those peasants who are cultivating their own lands with or without occasional hired labour are the self-employed and self-respecting and self-reliant members of our society and as such any Socialist Society should welcome their presence, activity and stake in its midst as forming the back-bone for its economic and social independence and self-governance. It is fortunate that in our country more than 50% of our working population happen to be such self-employed peasants and they are aided by the similarly self-employed 4 crores artisans. It is, therefore, the minimum duty of any Government which puts its faith in socialism and social justice to give every possible encouragement to our self-employed peasantry and artisans to continue to maintain their independence, enjoy their self-employment status and encourage them to organise themselves into Service Co-operatives and thus protect them from the ravages of merchants, bureaucrats and privileged classes of all professions.

The Convention calls upon the Government to make up its mind once for all to appreciate, support and strengthen the self-employed economy of peasant proprietors and to give them every possible assistance including the supply of working capital, manures, cattle feeds, tested or improved seed and know-how and also the organisation of Farm Service Co-operatives and the establishment

of a chain of warehouses to be owned and managed by the self-governing Co-operative Marketing Societies. The Convention also requests the Government to realise that it has as great responsibilities towards this self-governing peasant proprietors as towards the industrial proletariat and the professional classes and that it is as much its duty to organise for them protective and insurance schemes against floods, famines, failure of crops, cattle epidemics, erosion of soils as to organise Social Insurance, provide employment etc. to industrial and professional classes.

It is regrettable that instead of displaying such appreciation and offering such assistance to these classes of self-employed producers of our country, the Planning Commission should be planning to weaken their economy, destroy their freedom, by imposing Panchayat Landlordism on them.

This Convention has taken note of the controversy that has been created by the Planning Commission through their ill-advised plans and efforts to replace the self-employed peasant proprietors by the so-called Co-operative Farms and thus achieve uniformity among all the villagers through their conversion into mere members of the so-called co-operative village community. While the Convention has, however, no objection to the organisation of Co-operative Farms through voluntary efforts on all Bhoodan and Government lands for the benefit of the hitherto landless agriculturists as an experimental measure, the Convention is definitely opposed to any National campaign being organised by the Government to drive peasant

proprietors into the so-called Co-operative Farms because such a campaign if organised without first of all proving the comparative greater advantages of such a Co-operative Farming over and above the proved merits of peasant economy of self-employed people would only create such coercive atmosphere as to deny the self-employed peasant proprietors of their freedom to continue to be so self-employed, self-reliant, self-governed and self-respecting producers befitting a socialist society. Therefore, this Convention appeals to Government not to be so hasty in initiating any such campaign in favour of Co-operative Farming to the detriment of the self-employed peasant economy.

Let both Public and Private Trade Prevail in Food Grains

This Convention takes strong objection to the recent move of the Governments at the Union and State levels to procure compulsorily rice and wheat at arbitrarily fixed level of prices against which peasants have been, all along, complaining in vain as being nneconomic unremunerative and far below the costs of cultivation. The decision of the National Development Council to take over completely the wholesale trade in food grains and entrust it to the State Trading Corporation with its State units and its allies the licensed whole-sale merchants to procure all surplus food grains from our peasants at the arbitrarily fixed prices can only result in depriving the peasants of any possible benefits of free trade in food grains and placing them at the mercy of Governmet servants and licensed wholesalers. This policy would make them victims of the vagaries of official

policies regarding fixation of prices, procurement and estimation of peasants' capacity to supply food grains to the market. This would end in castigating all so unjustly such of the peasants as are obliged to fight against the State monopoly of procurement either directly or indirectly, knowingly or unknowingly as blackmarketeers and as antisocial elements. Therefore, this Convention requests Government to revise its decisions to ban all free trade in the marketing of food grains and to give freedom to peasants to sell at least 50% of their food grains in free market i. e. to unlicensed merchants. Government should anyhow be prepared to purchase from all agriculturists under all circumstances such of their surplus food grains as are offered by them voluntarily at the procurement prices. It should, however, allow peasants to reap the benefit of any higher levels of prices as may come to prevail in the open market.

If, however, inspite of the costly experience gained by Government and the Public through the cruel and inefficient control administration of 1948-52, Government wishes to inflict upon our peasants and consumers the rigors and sufferings of compulsory procurement at procurement prices, this Convention demands that Government should at least be willing to take the leaders of peasants into the fullest confidence in all the States in fixing the prices of food grains at remunerative prices only and thus prevent further pauperising of peasants and ensure the continuance of minimum incentives for efficient production and intensive cultivation.

Pay Remunerative Prices

The All India Kisan Convention reiterates the universal demand of peasant masses that the State should take necessary steps to assure them of remunerative prices at least for their major produce such as rice, wheat, cotton, jute and groundnuts in order to provide minimum of incentives to peasants to produce more and more, to achieve maximum productivity from land and also to protect them from the vicissitudes of seasons and markets.

It is unfortunate that till now Government has not taken any concrete steps to ascertain, if need be, through a number of pilot enquiries made in different States and in different areas the cost of cultivation of the major crops and also the cost of living of peasants both landed and landless and to fix the prices of major agricultural products based upon the results of such enquiries so that the average cost of cultivation and minimum standard of living can be assured for peasants and cultivation under peasant economy can be placed on a stable and progressive footing.

Farm Service Co-operatives To Serve Both Producers and Consumers

This Convention wishes to assure the consumers of food grains that Kisans are not at all anxious to profiteer either in production or marketing of food grains and are only keen on protecting themselves by demanding nothing more than remunerative prices. Peasants are willing to cooperate with the consumers in demanding that the

Government should take all such measures as the opening of fair price shops and selling food grains to vulnerable, under-nourished and under-privileged sections of people at subsidised levels of prices.

This Convention, therefore, requests Government to develop the Co-operative movement with the objects of strengthening the family farm economy and not to weaken it and to forstering democratic development and control of Farm Co-operatives by peasants themselves, but not to poison them with bureaucratic control. This Convention is also anxious that Government should utilise Co-operative Marketing Societies organised mainly by peasants themselves in purchasing food grains from peasants at remunerative prices and supplying them to the Co-operative Stores in the consuming centres; eliminating the middleman's profits and thus benefit both the producers and consumers of food grains. Whenever and wherever licenses are being issued for whole-sale purchase of food grains, such farmers' Co-operative Marketing Societies should be given first preference.

Liberate Co-operatives from Official Interference

This Convention welcomes the lead given by the National Development Council in favour of developing Farm Service Co-operatives and increasing the total supply of working capital needed by peasants for fully financing their agricultural operations and their own maintenance during the crop season mostly based on the credit of their crops to be produced and trusts that the peasants as well as co-operators and Co-operative Societies would rise to the occasion take the fullest advantage of this new

lead and see that at least 50% of the total productive effort of those employed therein will come to be benefited by this Co-operative atmosphere of assistance from Government. At the same time the Convention warns Government against turning this new atmosphere of co-operation into another engine of exploitation and coercion against our peasants through the continuation and expansion of their present-day habits and methods of bossing over the Co-operative Societies and interfering in their internal administration and turning them all from being self-governed institutions into guided missiles of bureaucracy and political influences and interests.

APPENDIX II

On the question of Land-ceiling, Prof. N. G. Ranga, President, Bharat Kisan Sammelan, in a communication, signed by 108 members of the Congress Parliamentary Party, has conveyed to the Leader of the Congress Party, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as under:—

"We are anxious that the proposal for imposing ceilings on incomes and properties as a matter of social justice ought to be made applicable to all types of incomes and properties of all classes of people and implemented simultaneously if we are to be just to all sections of our society and if we are not to be accused of discriminating against our peasant proprietors alone. Even if practical exigencies were to be considered, it is essential that ceilings should be imposed on at least any one of the many types of urban and professional incomes and properties simultaneously with the imposition of land ceilings if at all we are to justify our stand before the bar of public opinion and the social conscience of our nation. Therefore, we request that if the Congress were to be so very particular about the imposition of

land ceilings not only on future holdings, but also on present holdings and incomes, then it should not be done unilaterally but simultaneously with the imposition of similar ceilings, at least on the incomes of Government employees or professional employees or any other urban class of people. We trust that nothing will be done to make the Congress open to the charge of discrimination against the broad masses of agriculturists."



REVIEWS ON

'Peasant and Co-operative Farming'

"------ It is a delightful effort at independent thinking which is so different from the uncritical adoptions of theories and doctrines evolved in other countries, where the environment and historical context are, in vital respects, different from the Indian environment and the Indian tradition------. It is tempting to think that your book will produce the desired impression and influence the policy in the field of Agriculture on the part of the Planning Commission and the Government of India------"

Shri B. R. Shenoy,
Gujerat University,
Member of Panel of Economists,
PLANNING COMMISSION.

"------ is a timely warning against too readily assuming, when planning Agricultural development, that Co-operative farming can be the solution to all the problems of small-scale farming. Expert opinion in FAO shares his conclusion that the potentialities of Co-operative farming cannot be correctly assessed without taking into account the non-economic values of individual farming by peasants------"

Shri B. R. Sen,
Director-general,
Food & Agricultural Organisation of United Nations,
ROME.

"------His searching analysis has expoused the comparative merits of Peasant proprietorship and exposed its crazy rival of Co-operative farming---- exposes the hallowness of co-operative farminq---- is really a worthy contribution to peasant farming and a timely warning to the plan-crazy government-----"

Indian Libertarian, Bombay.

"This book is a vigourous protest against the Planning Commission's objective of reorganising Indian Agriculture on the basis of Co-operative farming. It makes a passionate plea for the preservation of Peasant farming as the most wholesome feature of rural economy - - - - - . It deserves to be carefully read by all those who are interested in the future of our rural economy, particularly by the legislators and ministers who have the responsibility of promoting agricultural development."

The Hindu, Madras.

"- - - - - - the authors have attempted to evaluate the impact of co-operative farming on our subsistence agriculture and have made a forceful plea for retaining the peasant family economy, which in their opinion is the primary indivisible co-operative unit of labour mobilization and utilization - - - - - -"

Hitavada, Nagpur.

"- - - - - - the authors have marshalled so much statistical evidence in favour of their arguments that it is difficult to disagree with them - - - - - Prof. Ranga and Sri Paruchuri deserve congratulations for this valuable thesis which should help clearing much of the mist that surrounds the co-operative farming - - -"

A. I. C. C. Economic Review, Sept. 15, 1958.

"The Indian Peasant Institute is doing useful work in a sphere where ignorance and loose talk have been rampant."

"The small peasant, a pillar of individualism and democracy in this age of mass action and mass thinking, needs to be saved from the saviours — they have pointed out that it is an erroneous and dangerous impression in the minds of so many of our national leaders that peasant economy is a part of or an expression of private sector."

Mankind, Jan. 1959.